

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 10249

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR UNGA KS KN
SUBJ: KOREA AT 32ND UNGA: CORE GROUP

1. MOFA INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS BUREAU DIRECTOR CHUNG U-YONG AND UN DIVISION CHIEF YI CHONG-BIN TOLD POLCOUNS AND EMBOFF DECEMBER 28 THAT HE BELIEVED NORTH KOREA WOULD ATTEMPT TO CONSOLIDATE ITS POSITION WITH ITS UNGA SUPPORTERS IN COMING MONTHS IN PREPARATION FOR CONFRONTATION ON KOREAN QUESTION AT 32ND UNGA. CHUNG EXPRESSED VIEW THAT OPTIMUM ROKG POSTURE WAS TO CONFRONT NORTH KOREANS FORTHRIGHTLY IN UN IN ORDER TO INDUCE REPETITION OF WITHDRAWAL OF HOSTILE RESOLUTION AND FINESSING UN-KOREA DEBATE FOR ADDITIONAL YEAR. IN EARLIER CONVERSATION MOFA UN DIVISION CHIEF YI CHONG-BIN EXPRESSED CONCERN TO EMBOFF THAT NORTH KOREANS MIGHT BE INDUCED BY THEIR FRIENDS TO SUBMIT MORE MODERATE RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD GAIN GREATER SUPPORT AND PRESENT CORE GROUP WITH MORE DIFFICULT PROBLEM THAN IN 1976.

2. CHUNG SAID ROKG WAS VERY PLEASED WITH CORE GROUP PERFORMANCE, ESPECIALLY IN MORE THAN 55 CAPITALS AROUND THE WORLD, AND WAS ANXIOUS TO KEEP GROUP ACTIVE. HE SAID MOFA HAD TAKEN SOME INITIATIVES IN THIS DIRECTION ALREADY, SUGGESTING TO ROK-UN MISSION THAT CORE GROUP BE CONVENED FOLLOWING UNGA ADJOURNMENT IN DECEMBER. ROK MISSION HAD RESPONDED THAT UN DELS WERE "SICK
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OF KOREAN PROBLEM" AND ANXIOUS TO GET SOME REST AFTER ARDUOUS UN SESSION AND SUGGESTED CORE GROUP MEETING TAKE PLACE IN LATE JANUARY. CHUNG SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO ACCEED TO THIS SUGGESTION. YI SAID SOME TECHNICAL QUESTIONS REMAINED TO BE RESOLVED INCLUDING WHETHER IT WAS APPROPRIATE FOR THE ROK TO CONVENE THE CORE GROUP MEETING OR WHETHER SOME OTHER NATION SHOULD DO

IT. HE NOTED THAT CANADIANS HAD TAKEN INITIATIVE PRIOR TO 31ST UNGA. YI ALSO NOTED THAT ROK CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETINGS WILL BEGIN IN SEOUL IN EARLY FEBRUARY AND THOUGHT IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE TO VENTILATE UN POLICY WITH CORE GROUP MEMBERS IN TIME TO PERMIT ROKG TO PRESENT COORDINATED POLICY TO MISSION CHIEFS. YI ALSO NOTED UPCOMING NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING GROUP MEETING IN NEW DELHI IN LATE MARCH WHICH PROVIDE ADDITIONAL IMPETUS FOR CORE GROUP POLICY COORDINATION.

3. CHUNG NOTED THAT ROK FONMIN HAD BEEN TIED UP WITH US-ROK BILATERAL PROBLEMS IN RECENT WEEKS AND THERE HAD BEEN NO OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE UNGA POLICY QUESTIONS WITH THEM, THEREFORE, THEIR THINKING DID NOT YET HAVE HIS FULL APPROVAL. WITH THIS CAVEAT, CHUNG WONDERED WHAT USG VIEW MIGHT BE CONCERNING CONVENING OF CORE GROUP IN LATE JANUARY.

4. CHUNG ALSO RAISED QUESTION CORE GROUP COMPOSITION ALTHOUGH VERY PLEASED WITH CORE GROUP PERFORMANCE HE NOTED THAT COSTA RICA HAD NOT BEEN PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE MEMBER AND WONDERED IF IT MIGHT NOT BE USEFUL TO STRENGTHEN LATIN AMERICAN EFFORT.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT AND USUN VIEWS ON TIMING AND MODALITIES FOR REVIVING CORE GROUP.
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